This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-4 (canceled)

Claim 5 (currently amended): An information utilization apparatus comprising:

a memory configured to store a delivered piece of information including encoded data and applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

a verification unit configured to verify whether the applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified;

a plurality of independently operated decoding units configured to decode the encoded data stored in said memory unit;

a plurality of independently operated processing units arranged respectively corresponding to said plurality of independently operated decoding units and configured to respectively execute different operations on the data decoded by said plurality of independently operated decoding units;

a judging unit configured to judge if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data according to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation; and

an operation command issuing unit configured to issue a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding ~~decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit~~ one of the plurality of independently operated decoding units if the current time is judged by said judging unit to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data according to the verified applicable time data, whereby selectively enabling one of the plurality of independently operated decoding units and one of the plurality of independently operated processing units to execute the requested operation.

Claim 6 (currently amended): An information utilization apparatus comprising:

a memory configured to store a delivered piece of information including encoded data and applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

a verification unit configured to verify whether the applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified;

a decoding unit configured to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

a plain data storage unit configured to store the data decoded by said decoding unit;

a plurality of independently operated processing units configured to respectively execute different operations on the decoded data stored by said plain data storage unit;

a judging unit configured to judge if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data according to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation; and

an operation command issuing unit configured to issue a command responding to the request for the operation to said decoding unit and a corresponding ~~processing unit~~ one of the plurality of independently operated processing units if the current time is judged by said judging unit to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data according to the verified applicable time data and said plain data storage unit does not store the decoded data, and to issue a command responding to the request for the operation to ~~a~~ the corresponding ~~processing unit~~ one of the plurality of independently operated processing units if the current time is judged by said judging unit to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data and said plain data storage unit stores the decoded data, whereby selectively enabling one of the plurality of independently operated processing units to execute the requested operation.

Claim 7 (currently amended): An information utilization apparatus comprising:

a memory configured to store a delivered piece of information including encoded data and applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

a verification unit configured to verify whether the applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified;

a plurality of <u>independently operated</u> decoding units configured to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

a plurality of independently operated processing units arranged respectively corresponding to said plurality of <u>independently operated</u> decoding units and configured to respectively execute different operations on the data decoded by said plurality of decoding units;

a judging unit configured to judge if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data according to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation;

an operation command issuing unit configured to issue a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding ~~decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit~~ <u>one of the plurality of independently operated decoding units</u> if the current time is judged by said judging unit to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data<u>, whereby selectively enabling one of the plurality of independently operated decoding units and one of the plurality of independently operated processing units to execute the requested operation</u>; and

an operation command reserving unit configured to prevent the issuance of a command responding to the request for the operation until the time authorizing use of the encoded data if the current time is judged by said judging unit not to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data.

Claim 8 (currently amended): An information utilization apparatus comprising:

a memory configured to store a delivered piece of information including encoded data and applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

a verification unit configured to verify whether the applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified;

a decoding unit configured to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

a plain data storage unit configured to store the data decoded by said decoding unit;

a plurality of independently operated processing units configured to respectively execute different operations on the decoded data stored by said plain data storage unit;

a judging unit configured to judge if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data according to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation;

an operation command issuing unit configured to issue a command responding to the request for the operation to said decoding unit and a corresponding ~~processing unit~~ one of the plurality of independently operated processing units if the current time is judged by said judging unit to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data and said plain data storage unit does not store the decoded data, and to issue a command responding to the request for the operation to ~~a~~ the corresponding ~~processing unit~~ one of the plurality of independently operated processing units if the current time is judged by said judging unit to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data and said plain data storage unit stores the decoded data, whereby selectively enabling one of the plurality of independently operated processing units to execute the requested operation; and

an operation command reserving unit configured to prevent the issuance of a command responding to the request for the operation until the time authorizing use of the encoded data if the current time is judged by said judging unit not to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data.

Claim 9 (canceled)

Claim 10 (currently amended): An information access control method for use in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said method comprising:

verifying whether applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

arranging a plurality of independently operated decoding units to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

arranging a plurality of independently operated processing units respectively corresponding to said plurality of decoding units to respectively execute different operations on data decoded by said plurality of independently operated decoding units;

judging if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation; and

issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit one of the plurality of independently operated decoding units if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data, whereby selectively enabling one of the plurality of independently operated processing units to execute the requested operation.

Claim 11 (currently amended): An information access control method for use in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said method comprising:

verifying whether applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

arranging a decoding unit to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

arranging a plain data storage unit to store data decoded by said decoding unit;

arranging a plurality of independently operated processing units to respectively execute different operations on data stored by said plain data storage unit;

judging if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation; and

issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to said decoding unit and a corresponding ~~processing unit~~ one of the plurality of independently operated processing units if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data and said plain data storage unit does not store the decoded data, and issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to ~~a~~ the corresponding ~~processing unit~~ one of the plurality of independently operated processing units if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data and said plain data storage unit stores the decoded data, whereby selectively enabling one of the plurality of independently operated processing units to execute the requested operation.

Claim 12 (currently amended): An information access control method for use in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said method comprising:

verifying whether applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

arranging a plurality of independently operated decoding units to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

arranging a plurality of independently operated processing units respectively corresponding to said plurality of independently operated decoding units to respectively execute different operations on data decoded by said plurality of independently operated decoding units;

judging if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation;

issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding ~~decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit~~ one of the plurality of independently operated decoding units if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data, whereby selectively enabling one of the plurality of independently operated decoding units and one of the plurality of independently operated processing units to execute the requested operation; and

preventing the issuance of a command responding to the request for the operation until the time authorizing use of the encoded data if the current time is judged not to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data.

Claim 13 (currently amended): An information access control method for use in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said method comprising:

verifying whether applicable time data included in the delivered piece of information in said memory has been falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

arranging a decoding unit to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

arranging a plain data storage unit to store data decoded by said decoding unit;

arranging a plurality of independently operated processing units to respectively execute different operations on data stored by said plain data storage unit;

judging if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data in response to a request for an operation;

issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to said decoding unit and a corresponding ~~processing unit~~ one of the plurality of independently operated processing units if

the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the verified applicable time data and said plain data storage unit does not store the decoded data, and issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to a~the corresponding ~~processing unit~~ one of the plurality of independently operated processing units if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data and said plain data storage unit stores the decoded data, whereby selectively enabling one of the plurality of independently operated processing units to execute the requested operation; and

preventing the issuance of a command responding to the request for the operation until the time authorizing use of the encoded data if the current time is judged not to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data.

Claim 14 (canceled)

Claim 15 (currently amended): A storage medium having program code instructions stored thereon which perform information access control when executed by a processor in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said instructions comprising:

storing the delivered piece of information in said memory together with applicable time data not to be falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

arranging a plurality of independently operated decoding units to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

arranging a plurality of independently operated processing units respectively corresponding to said plurality of independently operated decoding units to respectively execute different operations on data decoded by said plurality of independently operated decoding units;

judging if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the applicable time data in response to a request for an operation; and

issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit one of the plurality of independently operated decoding units if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the applicable time data, whereby selectively enabling one of the plurality of independently operated decoding units and one of the plurality of independently operated processing units to execute the requested operation.

Claim 16 (currently amended): A storage medium having program code instructions stored thereon which perform information access control when executed by a processor in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said instructions comprising:

storing the delivered piece of information in said memory together with applicable time data not to be falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

arranging a decoding unit to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

arranging a plain data storage unit to store data decoded by said decoding unit;

arranging a plurality of independently operated processing units to respectively execute different operations on data stored by said plain data storage unit;

judging if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to the applicable time data in response to a request for an operation; and

issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to said decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit one of the plurality of independently operated processing units if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to said applicable time data and said plain data storage unit does not store the decoded

data, and issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to a-the corresponding
~~processing unit~~ one of the plurality of independently operated processing units if the current time
is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data and said plain data storage
unit stores the decoded data, whereby selectively enabling one of the plurality of independently
operated processing units to execute the requested operation.

Claim 17 (currently amended):   A storage medium having program code instructions stored
thereon which perform information access control when executed by a processor in an
information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information
including encoded data, said instructions comprising:

storing the delivered piece of information in said memory together with applicable time
data not to be falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the
encoded data;

arranging a plurality of independently operated decoding units to decode the encoded
data stored in said memory;

arranging a plurality of independently operated processing units respectively
corresponding to said plurality of independently operated decoding units to respectively execute
different operations on data decoded by said plurality of independently operated decoding units;

judging if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by
referring to applicable time data in response to a request for an operation;

issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to a corresponding
~~decoding unit and a corresponding processing unit~~ one of the plurality of independently operated
decoding units if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the
encoded data, whereby selectively enabling one of the plurality of independently operated
decoding units and one of the plurality of independently operated processing units to execute the
requested operation; and

preventing the issuance of a command responding to the request for the operation until the time authorizing use of the encoded data if the current time is judged not to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data.

Claim 18 (currently amended): A storage medium having program code instructions stored thereon which perform information access control when executed by a processor in an information utilization apparatus having a memory which stores a delivered piece of information including encoded data, said instructions comprising:

storing the delivered piece of information in said memory together with applicable time data not to be falsified, the applicable time data defining a time period authorizing use of the encoded data;

arranging a decoding unit to decode the encoded data stored in said memory;

arranging a plain data storage unit to store data decoded by said decoding unit;

a plurality of independently operated processing units to respectively execute different operations on data stored by said plain data storage unit;

judging if a current time is in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to applicable time data in response to a request for an operation;

issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to said decoding unit and a corresponding ~~processing unit~~ one of the plurality of independently operated processing units if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data by referring to said applicable time data and said plain data storage unit does not store the decoded data, and issuing a command responding to the request for the operation to ~~a~~ the corresponding ~~processing unit~~ one of the plurality of independently operated processing units if the current time is judged to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data and said plain data storage unit stores the decoded data, whereby selectively enabling one of the plurality of independently operated processing units to execute the requested operation; and

preventing the issuance of a command responding to the request for the operation until the time authorizing use of the encoded data if the current time is judged not to be in the time period authorizing use of the encoded data.